



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE
FEDERAL BUILDING, 301 S. PARK, DRAWER 10096
HELENA, MONTANA 59626-0096

Ref: 8MO

April 27, 2000

Mr. Bob Castaneda, Forest Supervisor,
Kootenai National Forest
1101 U.S. Highway 2 W.
Libby, Montana 59923

Re: Bull Lake Estates Access Final
Environmental Impact Statement and Record
of Decision

Dear Mr. Castaneda:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region VIII, Montana Office has reviewed the above-referenced Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

While the EPA remains concerned about potential adverse effects to the ecological resources of the Bull Lake area and adjacent Federal resources that are likely to occur as a result of the development of the Bull Lake Estates subdivision, we do not object to provision of road access across Federal land to the proposed Bull Lakes Estates subdivision. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) requires the Forest Service to provide access to the owner of non-federally owned land for the reasonable use and enjoyment of those lands. We are pleased that Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used and monitored by the Forest Service during and after reconstruction, and are hopeful that BMPs and protective measures for Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas (RHCAs) will result in protection of water quality and wetlands in the Bull Lake area.

The EPA still considers the no action alternative to be the environmentally preferred alternative, since this alternative would avoid the adverse social, water quality and fisheries and wildlife impacts associated with an access easement to the Bull Lakes subdivision (e.g., increased litter, noise, traffic, law enforcement problems, sedimentation, nutrient enrichment, increased fishing pressure, harassment of kokanee salmon spawning, increased road traffic and access, increased vehicle/animal collisions, habitat disturbance and displacement, increased spread of noxious weeds, and adverse effects to the grizzly bear).



The EPA appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the FEIS and ROD. If you have any questions please contact Mr. Steve Potts of my staff in Helena at (406) 441-1140 ext. 232.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by

John F. Wardell
Director
Montana Office

cc: Cynthia Cody/Yolanda Martinez, EPA 8EPR-EP, Denver
Earl Sutton, Forest Service-Region 1, EAP, Missoula

**PARAGRAPH APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION_____ (Initials of OFA
Approving Official)**

NOTE: Transmit 2 copies to MIU

8MO File: 9901